



Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

Online Version: <https://www.feedthefuture.gov/article/six-recipes-sweeten-your-december>

Six Recipes to Sweeten Your December



Greg Kahn, Bobby Neptune



Antonio (left), a coffee farmer in Guatemala and Juanita (right), a cocoa farmer in Peru.

Around the world, millions of smallholder farmers grow coffee and cocoa to make a living, often dealing with limited resources and vulnerability to climate. Through our work to support value chains like coffee and cocoa, Feed the Future is increasing opportunities for these farmers and their families, helping them boost their incomes, improve their livelihoods, and connect to the global economy. Alongside our partners in business, civil society, research and government, we are helping these rural communities build a more secure future.

This fall, we invited you to help us spread the word about agriculture's potential in these communities to end hunger, poverty and malnutrition by sending us your [favorite coffee and/or cocoa recipes](#), and you responded in force. We received entries from across the United States and even one from abroad!

Your level of creativity was impressive! The majority of the recipes featured both coffee *and* chocolate. The votes are now in and you'll find the winners below. If you're looking to sweeten up your December, we encourage you to try out one of these winning recipes.

Thanks to everyone who participated, from sharing the contest with friends and followers to sending in recipes! You can still help spread the word this fall that we can [make an impact](#) against hunger, poverty and malnutrition.

Here's how:

- Prepare one of the winning recipes and post a picture of your creation on Twitter or Facebook. Add the hashtag #feedthefuture to make sure we see it!
- Work in a coffee or chocolate shop? Feature one of these delicious recipes on your December menu with a short note about the producers who make the ingredients possible.
- Learn more about where your food comes from—see if you can find where your favorite coffee and/or cocoa is from on the packaging or online and let us know in a tweet!

- Share these [social media infographics](#) with facts about coffee, cocoa and the smallholders who grow them.
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And the winners are...

Best Recipe Overall: [Cocoa and Dried Coffee Cherry Olive Oil Cake](#)

Best Coffee and Cocoa Recipes:

- 1st Place: [Mocha Icebox Cake](#)
- 2nd Place: [Cocoa-Java Baked Pumpkin Seeds](#)
- 3rd Place: [Peppermint Mocha Brownies](#)

Best Coffee Recipe: [Coffee Banana Smoothie](#)

Best Chocolate Recipe: [Spicy Orange Cocoa Crinkle Cookies](#)

Best Recipe Overall: Cocoa and Dried Coffee Cherry Olive Oil Cake

Submitted by: Erin Brannan (Washington, U.S.)

"For thousands of years there has been a lingering problem in coffee producing regions: What to do with the cherries that surround the coffee beans? Traditionally, the fruit of the coffee cherry is discarded during harvest. While some is used as compost, the majority ends up being a major contaminant as it starts to ferment and is often pushed into rivers and streams of already struggling regions.

If dried though, it has a unique flavor profile that ranges from dark roasted fruit notes (think plums and currants) from varietals grown in Central and South America to savory elements that are reminiscent of green tea and layers of that hard-to-define umami aspect from cherries grown in Vietnam. The dried fruit can be stabilized and milled into a powder and used as a supplement for cocoa or even flour to create dishes that span the spectrum of flavor and texture. This recipe happens to be gluten free and will redefine your opinion of what a gluten-free bakery item tastes like. It highlights existing flavors in the cocoa, so you end up needing less cocoa, tasting more, and experiencing flavors in a new way!"

Ingredients:

- ½ cup cocoa powder
- ¼ cup dried milled coffee cherry pulp (Vietnam varietal preferred)
- ½ cup hot water
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 2 cups almond meal
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 2/3 cup light olive oil
- ¾ cup sugar
- 4 large eggs

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Line a 9-inch round baking pan with parchment paper.
- Sift the cocoa and the dried milled coffee cherry pulp together into a small bowl. Add the boiling water and mix until smooth. You should end up with a chocolate paste. Stir in the vanilla and let it cool.
- In a separate bowl, mix the almond meal, baking soda and salt.
- Place the sugar and eggs in another separate bowl. Using a stand mixer, mix until incorporated. Slowly drizzle in the olive oil in a steady stream. Beat for 3 minutes until mixture thickens. Reduce speed and pour in the cocoa mixture. Mix until completely incorporated, then add the almond meal mixture and do the same.
- Pour into the prepared pan and bake for 40-45 minutes, or until the sides are set and the center looks slightly damp. When you insert a toothpick in the center, it should come out mostly clean, with a few crumbs. Let the cake cool completely on a rack. Once the cake is cooled, invert to release it from the pan and serve.

Best Coffee and Cocoa Recipe, 1st Place: Mocha Icebox Cake

Submitted by: Jamie Parchman (Texas, U.S.)

"This recipe is important to me because I developed it back in high school after having something similar at a restaurant. It was my very first recipe and is now a family favorite. Once someone has it, they will always ask for more! It's simple and easy to make, though it looks like it took forever to make. It is made with fun ingredients that can't help being a hit when put together." *Yields 10 servings.*

Ingredients:

- 1 cup very strong coffee
- 1 cup sugar, divided
- 3 cups heavy cream
- 16 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 3 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 vanilla bean pod, scraped
- 2 (1 pound, 2 ounces) packages chocolate chip cookies
- Shaved semisweet chocolate, for garnish

Directions:

- Coffee simple syrup: In a small sauce pan, over medium heat, whisk together coffee and 1/2 cup sugar. Bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer 5 minutes, uncovered, and whisk occasionally. Set aside to cool and refrigerate.
- Mocha whipped cream: In a large bowl, combine heavy cream, cream cheese, 1/2 cup sugar, 1/2 cup of chilled coffee simple syrup, cocoa powder and vanilla. Mix on low speed with electric mixer and then slowly raise the speed as mixture thickens until it forms stiff peaks.
- To assemble cake, arrange chocolate chip cookies flat in a 9-inch springform pan, covering the bottom as much as possible. You may need to break some up to fill in holes. Spread one-fourth of the mocha whipped cream evenly over cookies. Place another layer of cookies on top, lying flat and touching. Follow with another fourth of whipped cream. Continue layering cookies and cream until you have four layers, ending with whipped cream. Smooth top, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight.
- To serve: Run a sharp knife around the outside of the cake and remove the sides of the springform pan. Sprinkle the top with shaved semisweet chocolate. Cut cake into wedges and serve cold.

Best Coffee and Cocoa Recipe, 2nd Place: Cocoa-Java Baked Pumpkin Seeds

Submitted by: Sidney Hopkins (Iowa, U.S.)

"I developed this recipe last Halloween during my first semester of college. In an effort to reduce food waste and save money, I used 'pumpkin guts' from my jack-o-lantern in various recipes during the month of November. This recipe is perfectly suited for the fall season, leading to my new-found tradition of bringing baked seeds for family Thanksgiving. You can substitute squash seeds for pumpkin if that's what you have on hand, but you may need to reduce the bake time. Enjoy!" *Yields ½ cup of pumpkin seeds.*

Ingredients:

- ½ cup pumpkin seeds
- 1 tablespoon powdered sugar
- 1 tablespoon finely ground coffee (your favorite flavor)
- 1-2 tablespoons cocoa powder (depending on your love for chocolate)
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ tablespoon olive oil
- Powdered sugar and/or cinnamon, to taste

Directions:

- Pre-heat oven to 300 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Rinse pumpkin seeds with water so that little-to-no pulp remains. Set aside to dry.
- Combine sugar, coffee, cocoa powder, cinnamon and salt and mix until evenly blended.
- In a medium bowl, mix dried pumpkin seeds and olive oil until seeds are thinly coated.
- Add dry ingredients to the seed/oil mixture until each seed is fully coated with the dry mix. Scatter in single layer on a baking sheet* and bake for 25-35 minutes. About halfway through baking, stir seeds.
- When seeds are dry, remove from oven and cool. Optionally, add powdered sugar or cinnamon to the cooled seeds for a variation in flavor. Store in a closed container at room temperature. Enjoy!

**Cooking tip: Line the baking sheet with parchment paper for easier clean up!*

Best Coffee and Cocoa Recipe, 3rd Place: Black Bean Peppermint Mocha Brownies

Submitted by: Johnna Hall (Nebraska, U.S.)

"As registered dietitians, we are always looking for ways to make delicious, healthy food. These brownies have the perfect flavors to warm you up in the winter time." *Yields 12 brownies.*

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ cups cooked black beans (or one 15-ounce can of black beans, drained and rinsed)
- 2 eggs
- 3 tablespoons canola oil
- ½ cup cocoa powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon peppermint extract
- ½ teaspoon vanilla
- ¾ cup sugar
- 1 ½ teaspoons instant coffee
- Optional: ½ cup dark chocolate chips
- Optional: 6 peppermint candies, chopped (about ¼ cup)

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Lightly grease a 9-inch square pan.
 - In a food processor (or blender) combine cooked black beans, eggs, canola oil, cocoa powder, salt, vanilla, peppermint extract, sugar and instant coffee. Blend until smooth. Stir in chocolate chips, if desired.
 - Pour batter into prepared pan, bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into center comes out clean. Sprinkle chopped peppermints evenly over top, if desired. Cool completely before serving.
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Best Coffee Recipe: Coffee Banana Smoothie

Submitted by: Gelsey Bennett (District of Columbia, U.S.)

"My weekend relaxation ritual involves making coffee in my French press and sipping it slowly while I read a magazine. However, I often find that I make too much coffee! I developed this recipe as a way to use the extra coffee that I make on the weekends and have it in a healthy smoothie during the work week, which I can prepare quickly in the morning and drink on-the-go." *Yields 4 small cups or 2 large glasses.*

Ingredients:

- 2 bananas
- 8 coffee ice cubes
- 1 cup milk (dairy or non-dairy)
- Optional: 1 teaspoon of chocolate syrup as sweetener or decoration

Directions:

- Pour leftover coffee into an ice cube tray. Freeze overnight.
 - Blend coffee ice cubes, milk, and peeled bananas using the "smoothie" setting on your blender.
 - Serve and enjoy immediately.
 - Optional: Add some chocolate syrup to your smoothie as decoration or to make it more fun!
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Best Chocolate Recipe: Spicy Orange Cocoa Crinkle Cookies

Submitted by: Meghan Gillis and Amanda Saville (Virginia, U.S.)

"We work for CARANA Corporation, an organization that designs and implements inclusive economic development strategies for government, businesses, and international donors. CARANA is dedicated to the values of Feed the Future and improving livelihoods for smallholder producers of both coffee and chocolate. Throughout the years, our home office has sampled numerous cacao and coffee products from our projects around the world, and has been thrilled at the impact we are having on the lives of their producers. We are excited to share a recipe that incorporates cocoa, a value chain that touches the lives of hundreds of thousands of people in developing countries." Yields about 2 dozen cookies.

Ingredients:

Cookies

- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup granulated sugar, plus 1/2 cup extra for topping
- 1/2 cup cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 4 tablespoons softened butter
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- Zest of 1 medium orange
- 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar

Ganache

- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 10 ounces bittersweet chocolate chips
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

Directions:

- In a mixer, stir together the flour, granulated sugar, cocoa powder, baking powder, and salt. Once thoroughly mixed, pour in the softened butter, two eggs beaten lightly, and the vanilla. Once the mixture is well blended, add the orange zest and stir until just mixed. Put the bowl of dough in the freezer until dough is firm.
- When the dough is ready, preheat the oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit. Put the confectioners' sugar and the rest of the granulated sugar in separate small bowls. Roll the hardened dough into small balls and coat the outside in both types of sugar. Place them 2 inches apart on a greased baking sheet.
- Once all the cookie balls are ready, bake the cookies for 9-10 minutes. When done, let them cool for 5-10 minutes.
- Put the heavy cream in a saucepan and set on medium heat. Put the chocolate chips and the cayenne pepper in a mixing bowl. When the cream starts to boil, remove from heat and pour over the chips. Stir the mixture until the chocolate is melted and the consistency is smooth.
- Remove the cookies from the oven and drizzle the chocolate ganache over them.